

Remarks

Claims 1-6, 14-15 and 21-27 are pending. Claims 4-5, 7-13 and 16-20 are cancelled.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 14 and 21-23.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

Claims 1-3, 6, 15 and 24 – 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being obvious over Sano et al. (US Patent No. 5,562,985) as evident from the article by Dement'ev et al titled "Poisson's Ratio of Foamed Plastics."

Sano teaches a communication line material for use with fibers which are to be inserted into a duct using an air-blown method as explained in col. 1, lines 18-34 and Fig. 3. In order to provide a smooth flow through the air-blowing apparatus, Sano teaches the desirability of a fiber with a uniform diameter across its length. To achieve this fiber, Sano uses hollow spheres embedded in an energy-beam setting resin composition.

As explained in several places in Sano, the hollow spheres can be expanded as desired during the setting of the resin, but once the resin is set, they are fixed in size. See col. 4, lines 29-35 and col. 6, lines 47-50.

As recited in claim 1, the claimed microballoons are designed to compress when buffering a sensor fiber during its operation, not expand. This is because the polymeric material of the claims is designed to buffer a sensor fiber when the sensor fiber itself expands and contracts during operation, i.e. when the sensor fiber expands then the polymeric material gives way, or compresses, so as to not put pressure on the sensor fiber. This is explained in the specification on page 2, lines 3-12 and page 5, lines 8-16, for example. For this reason, Sano's teaching of a resin insulating material that is set to a fixed diameter prior to use of the fiber

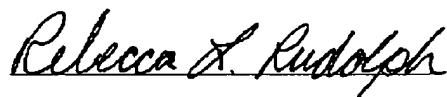
clearly does not teach or suggest the claimed invention and it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

The Examiner particularly indicated Example 2 as teaching the claimed method. However, this example, shown in Fig. 1B, merely adds a slick (silicon-based) layer to the outside of the resin-coated fiber as described in connection with example 1. The communication line material is still made with a resin that is hardened prior to use and therefore is not even capable of compressing during use as is claimed.

The Dement'ev article is described in the Office Action dated January 13, 2010 as describing Poisson's ratio, an inherent property of rubber-like polymers. It does not teach or suggest the specific recitations found in claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, allowance of all claims pending is respectfully requested. If a telephone conference would be of assistance in advancing the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call Applicant's attorney.



Rebecca L. Rudolph
Reg. No. 41,539
Agent for Applicant

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CARMEN PATTI LAW GROUP, LLC
1 N LASALLE ST, STE 4400
CHICAGO, IL 60602
(312) 346-2800
CUSTOMER NO. 32205